

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **SECTION 10 ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROGRAM**

#### **7.10.1 PURPOSE**

This section contains policy, standards, responsibilities, and procedures for the control or removal of asbestos at APHIS locations.

Asbestos is a well known health hazard. Diseases caused by inhaling asbestos fibers include asbestosis and mesothelioma.

#### **7.10.2 POLICY**

APHIS policy is to minimize employee exposure to airborne asbestos fibers at APHIS locations. APHIS will meet the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for asbestos in all areas occupied by APHIS employees. This will be done by control or removal of asbestos-containing materials.

Asbestos can be handled safely, and its presence is not a danger unless the material is disturbed and fibers released. Therefore, emphasis will be placed on ensuring that employees are familiar with the locations of asbestos-containing material, restricting access to areas with asbestos, and training maintenance staffs on how to work with asbestos.

#### **7.10.3 STANDARDS**

OSHA has established the following standards (29 CFR Part 1910.1001) for asbestos exposure. As specified in 29 CFR Part 1910.1001(c)(1) an employee may not be exposed to airborne concentrations of asbestos in excess of 0.1 fibers per cubic centimeter of air as an 8-hour time weighted average, and may not be exposed to levels above 1 fiber per cubic centimeter of air averaged over a 30 minute period.

#### **7.10.4 RESPONSIBILITIES**

Handling asbestos-containing material requires proper training and protective equipment to ensure the materials are handled safely. It is the responsibility of the head at each APHIS location to ensure that employees are familiar with the locations of asbestos-containing material and the procedures for ensuring the material is not disturbed.

The head of each APHIS location has these responsibilities when located in:

- A. General Services Administration (GSA) Controlled Space. GSA has an asbestos abatement program for the buildings it owns and leases. Report suspected asbestos to the GSA building manager, and ensure that asbestos-containing material and suspected asbestos-containing material is not disturbed.

- B. APHIS-Owned Space. The APHIS Safety, Health, and Environmental Staff has an asbestos inspection program to identify asbestos-containing materials in APHIS-owned locations. Inspections must be performed by qualified personnel. APHIS employees should not collect samples of suspect asbestos-containing material for the purpose of performing asbestos inspections. Ensure that an asbestos survey is conducted at your facility, and contact the Safety, Health, and Environmental Staff for information on the asbestos inspection program.

Ensure that asbestos-containing materials are properly managed, that maintenance staff are properly trained to handle the materials, and that other building occupants are familiar with the locations of asbestos-containing materials and instructed not to disturb them.

- C. APHIS-Leased Space. Request the building owner/manager to test materials suspected of containing asbestos. If asbestos is identified, require the asbestos be controlled or removed. Contact the following APHIS office, if the building owner/manager refuses to conduct tests or fails to control or remove asbestos:

USDA, APHIS  
Field Servicing Office  
Realty Section  
Butler Square West, 5th Floor  
100 N. Sixth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Phone: 612-370-2102